

REMARKS

Interview Summary

Applicants thank Examiner Shay for the courtesies extended during the personal, telephone interviews conducted with Bill Isaacs and Lisa Sims on March 24, 2006 and April 4, 2006. During those interviews, Applicants' representatives discussed the features that distinguish the invention recited in independent claim 34 from the documents cited and applied by the Examiner in the pending Office Action dated December 29, 2005 and the Advisory Action dated March 17, 2006. The Examiner agreed that the cited documents do not teach or suggest at least the feature of the transponder being configured to store the transmitted specific data as a new data set and to apply encryption to the new data set, thus preventing any stored specific data from being deleted, overwritten, or modified, as presently recited in independent claim 34.

Status of the Claims

After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-2, 5, 7, 10, 12-13, 15-16, 18, 21, 23-41, and 43-47 are pending in the present application, with claims 1, 18, 34, and 41 being independent. Applicants have amended claims 1, 13, 16, 18, 24, 34, 37, and 41 herein. Additionally, Applicants have canceled claim 42 herein without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. No new matter has been added.

Objections to the Drawings

In the Office Action dated December 29, 2005, the Examiner objected to the drawings as allegedly not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims, namely the features of (1) the "transponder cannot be removed from the light guide without damaging the transponder"; (2) the "alert device"; and (3) the "display device".

The Transponder Feature

Applicants submit that the original written description and drawings support the feature that the transponder cannot be removed from the light guide without damaging the transponder. Nevertheless, Applicants have amended the claims herein to remove that feature since the claims

are patentable without that feature. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw this objection to the drawings. Applicants have not acquiesced to any such objection and reserve the right to address the patentability of the relevant claim features in the future, in this or other related applications.

The Alert Device and the Display Device

Regarding the alert device and the display device, Applicants have submitted concurrently herewith a request to enter amended Figure 1 to show each item in the laser device of Figure 1. In the amended Figure 1, reference numeral 180 refers to the display device and reference numeral 185 refers to a system controller. The alert device is a component of the system controller. Applicants have amended the specification where appropriate to insert those reference numerals for existing components described therein. The original specification fully describes the display device and the system controller that includes the alert device (see page 5, lines 13 to 21; page 7 lines 9 to 22; page 11, line 9 to page 12, line 3; page 12, line 19 to page 13, line 24; and page 14, line 1 to page 15, line 2 of the original specification). Therefore, Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by way of the amendments to Figure 1 and to the specification. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw these objections to the drawings.

New Matter Objection

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the amendment filed February 7, 2005 under 35 U.S.C. 132(a) for allegedly introducing new matter into the disclosure. The Examiner stated that the following claimed material is not supported by the original disclosure: “transponder cannot be removed from the light guide without damaging the transponder.” Applicants submit that the original disclosure adequately supports the quoted language. Nevertheless, Applicants have amended the claims herein to remove that language. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw this objection. Applicants have not acquiesced to any such objection and reserve the right to address the patentability of the relevant claim features in the future, in this or other related applications.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Examiner stated that the specification allegedly does not enable the claimed invention. In particular, the Examiner alleged that the originally filed disclosure does not teach that the “transponder cannot be removed from the light guide without damaging the transponder.” Applicants submit that the original disclosure adequately supports the quoted language. Nevertheless, Applicants have amended the claims herein to remove that language. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw these claim rejections. Applicants have not acquiesced to any such rejection and reserve the right to address the patentability of the relevant claim features in the future, in this or other related applications.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 17 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Claim 17 was not pending at the time of the rejection. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 17 should be withdrawn. Additionally, Applicants submit that Claim 30 is definite as it defines a feature of the light guide. Thus, Applicants submit that the rejection of claim 30 also should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) or 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over one or more of U.S. Patent No. 5,742,718 to Harman et al. (“*Harman*”), International Application No. PCT/US98/20204 to Pacala et al. (“*Pacala*”), U.S. Patent No. 4,907,588 to Burston (“*Burston*”), and the allegedly admitted prior art of gluing and welding the transponder to the fiber. The Examiner maintained these claim rejections in the Advisory Action dated March 17, 2006.

Applicants respectfully traverse all of these claim rejections. As agreed by the Examiner in the March 24, 2006 and April 4, 2006 interviews, none of the documents cited by the

Examiner, either alone or in combination, describe, teach, or suggest at least the feature of the transponder being configured to store the transmitted specific data as a new data set and to apply encryption to the new data set, thus preventing any stored specific data from being deleted, overwritten, or modified, as presently recited in independent claim 34.

As described in an exemplary embodiment of Applicants' original specification at page 9, line 21 to page 10, line 3 and page 15, lines 3-16, a "write-once" transponder can be used, which can prevent the specific data stored on the transponder from being deleted, overwritten, or modified, and encryption of the specific data can protect the specific data from tampering or forging. Since none of the documents cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, describe, teach, or suggest at least the recited claim feature, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejection and allowance of independent claim 34.

Applicants note that claim 34 does not recite that only the transponder cannot delete, overwrite, or modify the stored specific data.

Applicants also have amended independent Claims 1, 18, and 41 to recite a similar feature of a transponder storing specific data and identity data such that it cannot be deleted, overwritten, or modified. Accordingly, Applicants submit that those claims also are allowable over the documents of record.

Dependent Claims

Claims 2, 5, 7, 10, 12-13, 15-16, 21, 23-33, 35-40, and 43-47 depend directly from one of the independent claims discussed above. Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claims, Applicants submit that the dependent claims are likewise patentable over the documents of record. The dependent claims also recite additional features that further define the claimed invention over the cited documents. Applicants submit that the cited documents do not disclose, teach, or suggest integrating any of those additional features into the presently claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants request separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit the foregoing as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated December 29, 2005. Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request such action. If any issues exist that can be resolved with an Examiner's Amendment or a telephone conference, please contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at 404.572.2809.

Respectfully submitted,



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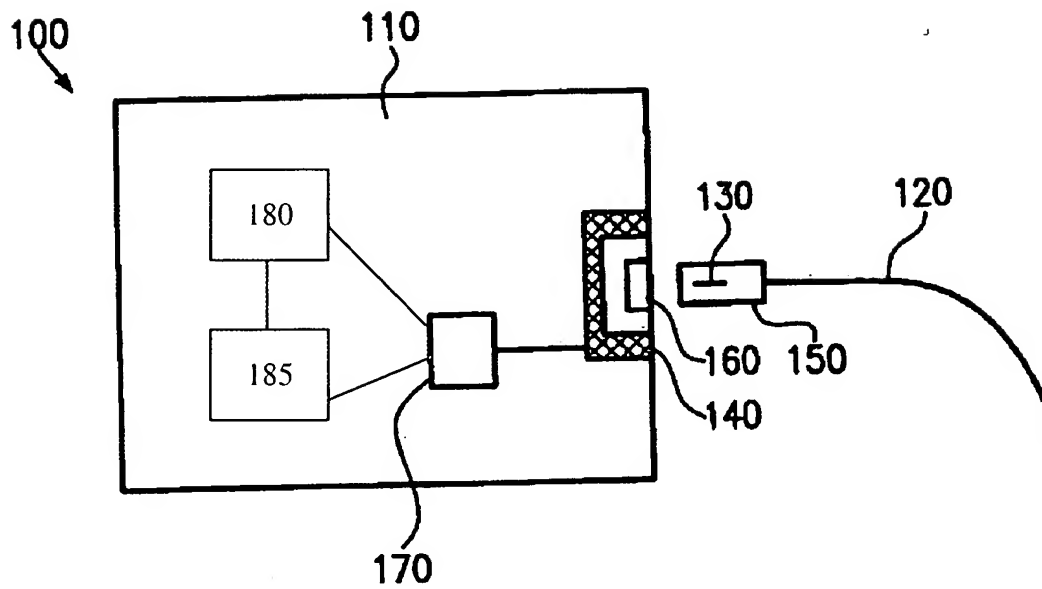


Fig. 1